

ARIE A. GALLES
ARTIST'S STATEMENT

"HEARTLAND" SERIES OF REFLECTED-LIGHT PAINTINGS
AESTHETICS AND TECHNIQUE

I work with light. I work with the glowing radiation of fluorescent color reflected onto a plain white surface. My pieces consist of extruded aluminum rods mounted on a canvas backing. The light-image, as viewed from the front, floats, shimmering over the surface of the canvas. This image is nonphysical, it exists in the gaps between the extrusions. Its an image created in, and of, the shadows of the rods, an "Anti-Shadow." The viewer is constantly involved in the contradiction between paint and light, the paradox between the physical and the perceptual sensations of seeing.

In the "Heartland" series I found the ideal synthesis of subject and technique. The aerial landscapes are pure light, and in essence a pure illusion of soft edged shapes which the reflected color creates.

I was first attracted to this imagery on cross country flights, noticing how the organic contours of the landscape below were suddenly defined and given scale by the intrusion of roads and fields: At night rivers became silver threads reflecting moonlight. My mages challenge the perception of the viewer to a game of hide-and-seek while exploring the permutations of geometric, organic and winding patterns. These in turn are superimposed by the white grid of vertical strips of the aluminum extrusions. This grid simultaneously divides the colors while heightening the perception of reflected light.

The iconography in these paintings evolve through a number of color studies in oil pastels, works of art in their own right, culminating in full scale cartoons. They are translated into strips of color information on the rear spines of the extrusions, and the physical paint is transferred onto the side surfaces of the aluminum rods with sable brushes. The intensely hued two dimensional surface of the cartoons don't actually evolve into my finished pieces. Rather, they metamorphose into the unique three dimensional instruments resonating with luminosity.

In my works the painted surfaces of themselves do not connote a visual sensation, they are, however, the source of the reflected light that brings the luminous image into existence.